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SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: MIDDLE EAST; IRAQ

MIDDLE EAST

[1](#)1. "Shared vision can spare us from descent into barbarism"

Columnist Catherine Ford observed in the right-of-center Calgary Herald (8/22): "...Moderation shouldn't be the dirtiest word in the lexicon of the Middle East, but it might as well be. As soon as the voice of reasonable compromise raises its head and suggests both Palestinians and Israelis are wrong in their separate ways, accusations of bias start. To be against the actions of the Israeli government is not to be an anti-Semite. It should never have to be necessary to point this out, but unlike all of the previous attempts to broker peace, extremists of both sides have hijacked the public debate. Israelis don't all support the actions of their government - and never have - any more than Canadians do. Or Americans. But nobody else has apologists with the ear of powerful people like the Jewish diaspora. And in no other case is political criticism seen as racism.... That the Jewish settlements on the West Bank are illegal is a fact, acknowledged around the world. That the Israeli government must dismantle them is obvious. But the extremists in Israel and their supporters have prevented their government from taking this drastic action and a democratic government that depends on coalitions to survive can't take the chance of losing in a non-confidence vote. There is precedence for choosing peace over accommodation, no matter how one wants to define the word.... We Westerners - Jewish, Arab or otherwise - can rail against the useless bloodshed and the suicide bombers, against the intransigence of the Jewish settlers and the chilling message of Israel's wall around the West Bank. But little we do will have any effect. We can, though, insist on the message of moderation and compromise not falling off the table.... No one can control the extremist factions allied against each other, but the countries they represent can call upon whatever values they share. Our sole job is to remind both sides in any conflict of that truth."

IRAQ

[1](#)2. "Americans are stuck in Iraq for a long time"

Columnist Jeffrey Simpson commented in the leading Globe and Mail (8/22): "...The Americans, having conquered Iraq on largely false premises, are now stuck there for a very long time, yet the longer they remain, the more likely resentment at their presence will grow. They have appointed a Governing Council, but cannot yet give it any power, since the first responsibility of any government is to ensure order, and this only the Americans can do. Order without popular consent means military rule, which is what Iraqis now have. Except that the order comes from a foreign power, or powers, and that kind of order, by definition, is proconsular government that, if extended, means imperial rule. A long time ago, former U.S. president Dwight Eisenhower advised president Lyndon Johnson that the Americans had to win the 'minds and hearts' of the Vietnamese to win that war. The Americans never did, although they deluded themselves that they could, because Americans have this enduring conviction that their self-ascribed purity of motive, the one now being embraced by the neo-conservatives and liberal internationalists alike, will be welcomed by those they intend to 'help.'"

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